

RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT



11-32 SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS “SWAT” TEAM OPERATING MANUAL

Chief of Police or Designee

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this manual is to establish guidelines for the Richmond Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics Team. The Richmond Police Department recognizes that the presence of a highly trained, highly skilled police tactical unit has been shown to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to citizens, police officers and suspects, and recognizes that a well-managed team response to critical incidents usually results in successful resolution of critical incidents.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to maintain a SWAT Team to enhance the safety of the community while minimizing the risks to others. The mission of the Richmond SWAT Team is “**THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE.**”

The members of the SWAT Team are specially trained in weapons and tactics for life-threatening incidents. Proper selection and re-qualification tests will be conducted to ensure that each SWAT Team member demonstrates and maintains required performance levels for essential job functions necessary for this position.

PROCEDURE

COMMAND AND CONTROL

The Department SWAT Team is under the supervision of the Major in charge of Support Services Division and falls under the emergency services unit. SWAT Team personnel will be under the immediate direction of the SWAT Team Commander and/or the Executive Officer.

Whenever the SWAT Team is activated for response to a critical incident or as a support unit on special operations, the SWAT Team Commander will be the on-scene supervisor while the unit is engaged in the operation.

The completion of all after action reports by SWAT Team personnel will be the responsibility of the SWAT Team Commander. The SWAT Team Commander will maintain a copy of these reports. A copy of the after action report will be sent to the Major in charge of the Support Services Division.

USE OF FORCE

General Order 1-5, Use of Force, will be the governing policy unless otherwise directed.

Recognizing that SWAT operations are hazardous and realizing that the successful management and resolution of an incident often involves the need for decisions that may affect the life safety of persons involved, the following shall be priorities during a SWAT operation:

1. Hostages
2. Innocent civilians in the involved area
3. Police officers
4. Hostage takers/suspects

The life safety of a hostage taker/suspect will always be a serious consideration, however, the life of a hostage taker/suspect will not take precedence over the life of hostages, civilians in the involved area, or police officers, regardless of the state of negotiations or any other activity to take the hostage taker/suspect into custody. In a hostage or barricade situation, negotiations will be the main effort in attempting to resolve the incident; however, the SWAT Team will also be prepared, throughout the operation, to execute a tactical option if it becomes necessary.

UTILIZATION

The SWAT Team will be utilized in life-threatening situations that require resources or skills not provided by normal police operations. Examples of such critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- High risk search warrants
- High risk warrant service
- High risk surveillance
- Hostage/Barricade situations
- Active Shooter incidents
- UC operations cover
- VIP/Personal Protection
- Coverage of special events

When there is a request for the utilization of the SWAT Team, it shall immediately be forwarded to the SWAT Team Commander or the Executive Officer if the commander is not available. If it is determined that the situation warrants the utilization of the SWAT Team, the SWAT Team Commander or designee will notify the Major in charge of Support Services or designee for approval. Once approval is granted, standard procedures for activation will be followed.

The SWAT Team Commander or designee will work jointly with any unit involved in the planning stage of special operations. The SWAT Team Commander has complete authority over the operation once the tactical aspect begins until its completion and the threat has been removed.

ACTIVATION

In the case of a critical incident (hostage situation, barricaded subject, etc) the first supervisor on-scene or Inspector will assess the incident and determine whether to initiate the SWAT and HNT page alert through DEC. DEC will send out the page and provide initial details about the incident and location for the response.

Responsibility for the tactical control of the scene remains with the on-scene supervisor until the SWAT Team Commander or designee clearly advises the supervisor that they are relieved.

Upon activation, SWAT members shall respond immediately to the incident. While en-route to the incident, SWAT members shall notify the dispatcher on the affected channel that they are 10-17 to the incident and confirm the staging location. The first SWAT member on scene shall immediately begin obtaining intelligence and pertinent information about the incident from the on-scene supervisor or Inspector.

As team members arrive, an Immediate Response Team will be formed and prepared to deploy if an immediate response is needed. Once the SWAT team is in position and the incident has stabilized, the uniform officers will be relieved from their inner perimeter positions and will be assigned to the outer perimeter or where needed.

The SWAT Team Commander will determine when other agencies (utility company, telephone company, etc) need to be contacted and what assistance or support is needed. This includes requests for Mutual-Aid assistance from other jurisdictions if the incident is manpower or time intensive.

PRE-PLANNED OPERATIONS

In the case of a pre-planned operation, the request of the SWAT Team will be made through the SWAT Team Commander. The SWAT Team Commander will then notify the Major of Support Services Division of the request or his/her designee.

SEARCH WARRANTS

Whenever the SWAT Team is being asked to execute an arrest warrant or search warrant, the following will be done:

- The SWAT Team Commander will be contacted and an advanced team will be sent out to review the mission and conduct a site-survey.
- The SWAT Team Commander or his designee will review the affidavit for the search warrant before the warrant is obtained.
- The affidavit will contain facts that will support the use of the SWAT Team.

SEARCH WARRANT FOR VIOLENT/NONVIOLENT OFFENDERS

The level of tactical response for the execution of a search warrant for a wanted subject will be determined based on the totality of current intelligence information related to the propensity for violence of the wanted subject(s) and his/her means, ability and willingness to execute such violence.

SEARCH WARRANT FOR EVIDENCE

The level of tactical response for the execution of a search warrant for evidence will be determined based on the totality of current intelligence information related to type of evidence to be seized, the targets propensity of violence, the targets means, ability and willingness to execute such violence, and the history of all individual(s) involved.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Tactical Medics assigned to the SWAT Team will be utilized in all SWAT operations unless stated otherwise. The Tactical Medics will be responsible for notifying Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Fire Department when needed. The responding EMS and Fire Units will be requested to respond to a specified location that is determined by the Tactical Medics.

Upon arrival, EMS/Fire personnel will:

- Be briefed on the immediate situation by the Tactical Medics
- Remain in a designated area for the duration of the incident

An emergency route to the incident will be kept clear for response of EMS/Fire equipment. At no time will EMS/Fire equipment or personnel enter the inner perimeter unless directed to do so by the Tactical Medics or by the SWAT Team Commander.

SWAT personnel will not be involved in the transporting of arrested or injured subjects.

MUTUAL AID

Pursuant to G.O. 1-11, the Richmond Police Department is a party to mutual aid agreements with local, state, federal law enforcement agencies and correctional institutions. A list of these agreements and copies of these agreements are maintained by the Police Department's Office of General Counsel.

In the event of an extended call-out situation involving agencies within other jurisdictions, it is the responsibility of the SWAT Team commander or designee to facilitate the coordination of efforts and/or relief.

TEAM DESCRIPTION

The Richmond SWAT Team consists of a command section, operators/entry personnel, and marksman/snipers.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The Richmond SWAT Team is under the immediate direction of the SWAT Commander and in his or her absence, the Executive Officer will be in charge.

The selection of a new Team Commander shall fall to the current Team Commander. Before retiring from the SWAT Team, the commander should select his or her replacement. The selected person will be the Executive Officer, second in command of the SWAT Team. It is recommended that this person remain in this position for at least a year. Once completed, the Team Commander should make a written recommendation to the Major in charge of Support Services Division that the Executive Officer will become the commanding officer when he or she retires. The Major in charge should approve or disapprove the selection and forward the recommendation to the Chief of Police.

With the exception of the above two command positions, there is no rank structure within the team. Positions of responsibility are assigned and determined by team members' experience and ability.

PERSONNEL SELECTION

The SWAT Team Commander will notify the Major of Support Services Division when vacancies exist or are anticipated on the SWAT Team.

Department personnel will be notified of vacancies through the Vacancy Bulletin. The Vacancy Bulletin will include specific criteria for eligibility, which includes:

1. Three years experience as a Richmond Police officer from the date of graduation
2. Currently hold the rank of police officer/detective
3. Firearms qualification score of 90 or better prior to the application deadline
4. No "FOUNDED" excessive use of force complaints in the past three years

The notification will be posted for thirty consecutive days. Officers interested in applying must follow the instructions as listed on the Job Vacancy and Training Opportunities Bulletin. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted or considered.

The selection of SWAT Team personnel will be conducted through several phases including but not limited to:

- Meeting minimum requirements listed in Vacancy Bulletin
- Written testing
- Physical fitness test
- Range Day
- Panel interview
- Background check
- Team evaluation
- Recommendation to Chief of Police

Before being considered eligible, an applicant must successfully complete all phases of the selection process.

Upon completion of the selection process, a roster will be compiled of those candidates who successfully completed all phases of testing. The roster will be forwarded to the Major in charge of Support Services for approval. This roster will remain in effect for a period of one year from the date of the final selection phase. When a vacancy occurs on the SWAT Team, the SWAT Team Commander has the option to select personnel from the existing list or if there are less than three remaining candidates, initiate a new testing process.

Officers accepting a SWAT Team position are expected to be available and able to respond to call-outs at any time. SWAT Team members are expected to schedule any off-call time so that the integrity of the Team and its members are not endangered.

If a Team member will be unable for call-out they are to notify the SWAT Team Commander, Executive Officer or other designee as soon as possible.

PROBATIONARY STATUS

Once selected, the candidate is on probationary status for one year. This probation may be extended up to one additional year at the discretion of the SWAT Team Commander. At any time during the probationary period, the candidate may be dismissed from the team.

FITNESS FOR DUTY

The SWAT Team commander, in consultation with the Major of Support Services and the Human Resources Division Chief, may at anytime require a SWAT Team member to submit to a physical or psychological evaluation. The examinations are conducted by a physician designated by the Department and no cost will be incurred by the employee.

SUSPENSION/DISMISSAL

SWAT Team members are selected based upon certain personality traits and individual abilities necessary for the make-up of a good team member. Once selected, SWAT Team members are held to a high standard and represent the team in every assignment or duty given. If a SWAT Team member exhibits behavior that brings negative reflection upon the team, the SWAT Team Commander has the discretion to suspend that member from training and mission ready status. The length of the suspension will be determined by the SWAT Team Commander.

Each member will be continuously evaluated to ensure that they are proficient in all skills necessary to perform their duties as a SWAT Team member. All SWAT Team members must maintain the minimum level of physical fitness as determined by the SWAT Team Commander. Failure to maintain adequate levels of performance or physical fitness are grounds for dismissal from the team. The SWAT Team Commander may remove a member from mission ready status and require them to obtain additional training in the areas in which the member has become deficient. Once this training is satisfactorily completed and their skills are improved, their mission ready status may be restored.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence may be granted by the SWAT Team Commander when requested by a SWAT Team member. The leave of absence can be granted for no more than twelve (12) months unless it is determined that there are extenuating circumstances. Once he or she requests to return, the SWAT Team Commander may require the team member to submit to a physical or psychological evaluation to determine their fitness for duty. The Team member will be required to attend training and will be constantly evaluated on their proficiency before mission ready status is restored.

TRAINING

The SWAT Team will train at least twice monthly for a minimum of 16 hours per month. Attendance on training days is mandatory and will be closely monitored by the Training Coordinator and Team Commander. Although situations may arise that will prevent attendance at training on certain times, all efforts will be made to avoid conflicts.

The training objectives for the SWAT Team are divided into five basic subject areas. In addition, minimum training standards have been established for the number of hours required in each training area annually. The following is a list of the five subject areas, a brief explanation of their content and the minimum number of hours required:

Firearms Qualifications - This area represents the required annual qualification time for all weapons. Minimum number of hours annually is 16.

Tactical Firearms - This area represents the time for all tactical firearms training. This includes, but is not limited to such areas as: combat firearms, movement courses, hostage rescue, etc. Minimum number of hours annually is 40.

Entry Training - This area represents the required time for all types of entry training. This includes, but is not limited to such areas as room entry, linear assaults, stairwells, active shooters and other small unit training. Minimum number of hours annually is 40.

Mission Skills Training - This area represents the required time used for all practical team skills that are required to perform the overall mission. This would include, but is not limited to such areas as rappelling, perimeter control, explosives training, executive protection, vehicle and suspect takedown and the use of chemical agents. Minimum number of hours annually is 30.

Personal Skills Training - This area represents the required time used for enhancing members psychological, and personal skills. Minimum number of hours annually is 16.

The SWAT Team conducts at least one Mock Mission annually which is a readiness drill containing a full blown call-out with roll players and the participation of the Hostage Negotiations Team. The drill is conducted as if it were an actual call-out to test each team's skills, proficiency, equipment and any newly developed tactics. Additionally, it allows the opportunity to permit team members to experience the command aspects of an actual mission and interspersing team members into several different team roles.

The SWAT Team Training Coordinator will maintain all training records.

EQUIPMENT

SWAT TRUCK

The Department will have and maintain a SWAT Team truck. This vehicle's use shall be limited to transportation of equipment and members in the performance of SWAT operations or training exercises.

There is no specialized training requirement for the SWAT truck. Any sworn officer of the Department possessing a valid Virginia driver's license is qualified to operate the SWAT vehicle, but authorization is granted only to active SWAT personnel or designees that have received training in the operation of the vehicle and the equipment that is stored in the vehicle. Personnel operating the vehicle in response to a SWAT call are governed by the Department's policy covering the operation of police vehicles.

The SWAT vehicle will contain equipment that is utilized by SWAT personnel during a call-out. This equipment includes but is not limited to: ropes, rappelling gear, breaching tools, special weapons, distraction devices, radios, ballistic shielding, chemical agents and spare personal equipment. The SWAT truck will also be equipped with appropriate communications equipment

to allow direct communication with members, negotiators, on-scene department personnel and DEC.

The SWAT Team Commander or designee will inspect the SWAT vehicle and contents monthly. This inspection will ensure that the vehicle and contents are operational and available for immediate use. This inspection will be documented and retained by the SWAT Team Commander.

SPECIAL PURPOSE ARMORED VEHICLE

The SWAT Team will be responsible for the housing and maintenance of the armored vehicle. The vehicle will be used for transportation to, during, and from calls and training assignments as determined by the SWAT Team Commander or designee.

The SWAT armored vehicle requires no specialized training requirements. Only sworn members of the SWAT Team possessing a valid Virginia driver's license shall operate the armored vehicle during SWAT operations or training exercises. Those members assigned to assist the SWAT Team must have authorization from the SWAT Team Commander or designee prior to operating any assigned SWAT vehicle.

The armored vehicle, even though equipped with emergency lights and siren, is not designed or intended for regular police duty. Prisoners will not be transported in the armored vehicle except in cases of extreme emergency.

Any equipment that the SWAT Team Commander deems necessary will be maintained in the vehicle such as breaching tools, shielding, etc. Should this equipment become permanent, a list shall be completed and maintained with the vehicle.

First aid kit, fire extinguisher, and permanently attached emergency equipment shall be maintained on the vehicle; as well as operating manuals for the armored vehicle and attached equipment (i.e. winch, etc.)

The SWAT Team Commander or designee will inspect the SWAT armored vehicle and contents monthly. This inspection will ensure that the vehicle and contents are operational and available for immediate use. This inspection will be documented and retained by the SWAT Team Commander.

INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT

SWAT Team members shall be issued the necessary equipment to facilitate successful operations during a tactical situation. Members shall store the equipment in an accessible location in order to keep response time to a minimum. Each active SWAT Team member will be issued the following equipment:

- BDU shirts (2)
- BDU pants (2)
- Cold Weather Gear including base layer, rain jacket and pants (1)
- Gortex boots (1 pair)
- Duty belt (1)
- Set of web gear (1)
- Nomex gloves (1 pair)
- Nomex hood (1)
- Ballistic helmet (1)
- Ballistic vest (1)
- Level four trauma plates (1)
- Radio Headset (1)
- Sig SP 2340 (Sigpro) 357 with Tritium sights (1)
- Alpha-numeric pager (1)

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

SWAT Team members to whom any piece of equipment is issued is responsible for keeping that equipment in mission ready condition at all times. Equipment will be serviceable and in proper working condition at all times. Equipment that is not working properly will be taken out of service and reported to the SWAT Team Commander immediately.

The SWAT Commander or his/her designee is responsible for authorization, approval and issuance of the SWAT equipment as designated on position specific forms.

Upon separation from the SWAT Team, former SWAT personnel are responsible for returning all tactical equipment to the SWAT Team Commander

PURPOSES OF SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

The SWAT Team possesses special equipment that is only to be used by team members that are certified and/or have received extensive training with the equipment. SWAT Team members utilizing this special equipment must understand the philosophy behind the equipment as well as the purposes for its use or non-use. This special equipment includes but is not limited to: Sniper rifles, less-lethal impact projectiles, flash/sound distraction devices, M26 Taser, and chemical agents (CS and OC). Furthermore, all SWAT members are required to wear the provided ballistic vest when engaged in any pre-planned, high risk situation.



CITY OF RICHMOND

INTRACITY CORRESPONDENCE

DATE:

TO:

THRU:

FROM:

SUBJECT: S.W.A.T. TEAM AFTER ACTION REPORT

TYPE OF INCIDENT:

CALL OUT DATE:

CALL OUT TIME:

CALL OUT LOCATION:

FIRST RESPONDING UNIT (S):

REQUESTING AGENCY/UNIT:

AUTHORIZED BY:

INJURIES:

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY:

DAMAGE REPORT COMPLETED BY:

INCIDENT REPORT NUMBER:

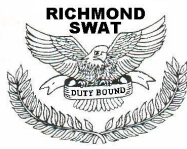
TEAM MEMBERS INVOLVED:

MEDICAL SUPPORT:

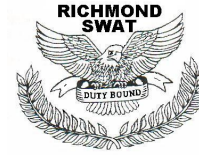
TEAM ASSIGNMENTS:

SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENT:

RICHMOND S.W.A.T



AFTER ACTION SUPPLEMENT



NAME:

CALL OUT LOCATION:

CALL OUT DATE:

INCIDENT NUMBER:

CALL OUT TIME / END TIME:

OPERATION PLANNING ASSIGNMENT:

TEAM ASSIGNMENT/EQUIPMENT ISSUED:

OPERATION EXECUTION:

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: